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Seth Peters

University of Massachusetts Medical School

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Predisposed Health Conditions of Children Exposed to Methamphetamine In Utero

Seth Peters, MPH

Ph.D. Candidate 2018, UMMS

1st Faculty of Medicine, Charles University, Prague, Czech Republic

Methamphetamine (MA) use and abuse is a growing problem worldwide [United Nations World Drug Report]. It is common knowledge that MA use affects not only the user, but also friends, family, and the communities close to them [NIDA]. One area of impact that is lacking sufficient study is the effects of MA use by expectant mothers on her child later in life. That is to say, a child who was exposed to MA in utero may be more likely than an unexposed fetus to have predispositions to a variety of health conditions. After an extensive PubMed database search, it is apparent that research is limited on the childhood illnesses and health conditions related to fetal exposure to MA. Some research, suggests a potential link between a fetus exposed to MA and the development of attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) later in childhood. [Kiblawi, et. al.; Legasse, et. al.] The lack of available research warrants an exhaustive database search and a retrospective epidemiological study to better understand the health risk of children exposed to MA. The knowledge gained from this work can inform healthcare providers and public health officials when intervening to reduce MA use and addiction.